

An invention is defined by the structural recitations in the claims. The only real difference between the invention defined in Claim 1 and Claim 9, for example, is the preamble and “wherein clause.” The structure described in Claim 1 and 9 is substantial the same. As set out below, a minimal amendment to Claim 1 eliminates any possibility that Claim 1 and Claim 9 describe different inventions:

1. A bracket for a system for supporting formwork for forming a crown on a concrete column of a highway bridge, ~~said system comprising a pair of brackets attachable to opposite sides of said column~~, said bracket including:

a box-shaped upright defined by spaced apart inner and outer walls connected by sidewalls, a central partition positioned between said sidewalls and connected to said inner and outer walls, a set of aligned openings formed respectively in an upper portion of said inner wall and said outer wall, and a set of tubes positioned on respective sides of said central partition to aligned respectively with said opening sets,

a horizontally positioned support arm defined by spaced apart channel members having inner ends attached said upright outer wall immediately below said outer wall openings, an end plate attached to outer ends of said channel members, a jack-screw plate formed with a jack-screw opening prepared for disposition of a lower end of a jack-screw and attached to top flanges of said channel members, a jack-screw tube carried by said channel members inward from said end plate to align with said jack-screw plate opening, and a pair of reinforcing plates attached respectively to said channel members and to said upright outer wall, and

a pair of angularly positioned tubular braces having lower ends attached to said upright outer wall and upper ends attached respectively to bottom flanges of said support arm channel members,

~~a jack-screw having a lower end extending downward through said jack-screw plate opening and an upper end prepared to operatively connect with said formwork, and~~

~~an adjusting nut threadedly disposed on said jack-screw to seat on said bracket support arm jack-screw plate;~~

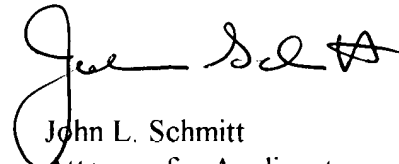
wherein for use, one said bracket[[s are]] is affixed to a respective side[[s]] of said column by bolts extending outward from said respective ~~said~~ sides of said column and through said set[[s]] of aligned openings in each said bracket upright inner and outer walls, said formwork is attached to ~~said~~ upper ends of ~~said~~ jack-screws disposed in said bracket jack-screw openings and a vertical location of said formwork is adjusted by rotation of ~~said~~ jack-screw nuts operatively disposed respectively on said jack screws.

Claims 2-8, dependent on Claim 1, are easily amended to reflect these changes to Claim 1.

While the rules are unclear as to whether an amendment to the claims may or may not be

entered at this time, Applicant herewith is submitting such an amendment (pages 4-10 attached hereto) and urges Examiner to enter such. Alternately, Applicant elects to proceed with Claims 9-12. Claims 1-8, as amended, then can be entered in response to Examiner's first Action of the merits. Considering that this application has been on file for nearly two years (filed September 26, 2003), Applicant submits that a further seemingly unnecessary delay is unjust.

Respectively submitted,



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